MEN OF TO-DAY SERIES

BOOK V

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU



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BARODA.

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Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

(The story of his life.)

by

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FOREWORD

THIS is the fifth book of a series of biographies of living men entitled '**Men of to-day Series.**' Jawaharlal Nehru needs no introduction to the reader. He is one of India's great sons, and his life is an example of noble sacrifice in the cause of Indian freedom. This small book-let gives a short life-story of the great man.

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Jawaharlal Nehru

The Nehrus originally inhabited the snow-clad mountain slopes of Kashmir. More than two hundred years ago one of the ancestors of Jawaharlal descended down from the heights of the mountains and came to the plains below in search of fame and fortune. In those days India was under the Mughol rule. The last of the powerful Mughol Emperors, Aurangzib had died, and the Emperor who sat upon the Mughol throne then was a feeble and weak monarch. The Brahman from Kashmir, being a learned man, a renowned scholar of Sanskrit and Arabic, received a cordial welcome from the Mughol Emperor at Delhi. The Emperor granted a house on the bank of a canal for the Brahman to dwell. When the Brahman established himself well in the imperial city he sent for his family and thus the first Nehru home was established in Delhi.

The Kashmir Brahman's original name was Pandit Raj Kaul. The fact of his being a dweller on the bank of a canal added the suffix 'Nehru', which was derived from Nehar–a canal, to his name.

For a considerable length of period the Nehrus had good connection with the Emperor of Delhi, and afterwards, when the East India Company became powerful, the Nehrus enjoyed responsible position under the company. Thus the Nehru family

established by Raj Kaul had a glorious and honourable existence till the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857.

Every upheaval or revolt brings with it dynamic changes. The revolt of 1857 told upon the fortunes of the Nehru family. During the years that intervened between the period of the decline of Mughol rule and the establishment of British rule, the fate of thousands of families was in the balance. During these years the fortune of the Nehru family waxed and waned considerably, and at last the Sepoy Mutiny brought upon it a severe blow. The family lost all connections with the rulers and lost all their money and other possessions. Now the family found no need to dwell in the imperial city, and so a move was made to Agra.

At this time there were two young men in the Nehru family upon whom fell the burden of supporting the family. These two men, who were the uncles of Jawaharlal, had a smattering knowledge of English with the help of which they pushed their way forward in life. Bansi Dhar Nehru, one of the two uncles, was employed in the judicial department of the British Government, and the other, Nand Lal Nehru, after being the Dewan of an Indian State in Rajputana for ten years, studied law and practiced as a lawyer in Agra.

It was in Agra that Motilal Nehru, the father of the hero of this history, was born on the sixth of May 1861. Motilal, being the youngest of the brothers, was a favourite child in the family. After completing

his studies at school he joined the college. At college he was only an ordinary student, and perhaps a boistrous element. He had a liking for sport and physical exercises from an early age, and his regular practice of taking physical exercises kept him in good health even in the eve of his life.

Motilal's college carrier ended with his failure in his B. A. examination, He did not graduate himself, but studied for the vakil's examination, and passed the tests not simply, but topping the list of successful candidates. Under the guidance of his brother he soon learned to practice in the courts. After serving the term of apprenticeship for three years at Cawnpore, Motilal went to Allahabad to practice in the High Court.

With the shifting of the High Court from Agra to Allahabad, the Nehru family also moved to Allahabad, and since then they have lived there. Motilal Nehru soon grew to be an efficient and able member of the Bar. With the growth of his popularity his income also increased and his steady application and loyalty to his work foreshadowed a rise in the ladder in his future days. At this time, when the glowing embers of the Nehru fortune were fanned into flame by the energetic and intelligent labours of Motilal, Pandit Nand Lal was suddenly snatched away from the family by the hand of death. Nand Lal's death was a terrible blow for Motilal; it was really a cruel fate that took away Nand Lal from the family at such a time when Motilal required his support and

guidance most. The family bore the irrepairable loss bravely and looked towards Motilal for support and guidance. When Motilal realised the heavy weight of the burden resting on his shoulders, he put his heart and soul into his work, and laboured with a dogged determination to succeed.

Somewhere at this time the activities of the Indian National Congress, then in its infancy, attracted the attention of educated Indians. Motilal was a nationalist, but did not take any part in the Congress activities, as his hands were full with the lawyer's work. It was amidst such surroundings that Jawaharlal Nehru was born in Allahabad on the 14th November 1889.

II

Jawaharlal's childhood was uneventful. Being born of prosperous parents—by now Motilal had risen higher in the social ladder and had reached that class of people who are classified as higher middle class—, he had every homely comforts. He had English governessess to take care of him and had private tutors to teach him. One of his childhood acquaintances was Munshi Mubarak Ali, a Mussalman Munshi of a respectable family. This Munshi told him innumerable tales from the **Arabian Nights** and entertained him. Munshi was Jawahar's confidant and Jawahar confided to his 'Munshiji,' all the little secrets his little heart held.

Jawahar listened to other stories from Hindu mythology, told to him by the women folk of his family. He heard the epic stories of the Ramayana and

the Mahabharata. He also attended many a religious ceremony and took part in **Pujas.** He did all these things in the same way in which any other boy of his years might have done. In those days he understood religion in terms of many **Pujas** and **Bhajans,** in which the women folk took a greater part than the men. This, perhaps, led young Jawahar to think that religion was the business of women and not of men.

He began to think consciously of God only after his acquaintance with Mr. Ferdinand T. Brooks. It was when he was eleven years old. Mr. Brooks, a resident tutor of Jawahar, was a theosophist. He brought in his influence to bear upon his pupil and Jawahar began to like the ideas of his tutor. Closer contact with Mr. Brooks converted Jawahar into a theosophist, and when Mrs. Annie Besant visited Allahabad, she herself performed the initiation ceremony and accepted young Jawahar as a member of the Theosophical Society. This happened when Jawahar was thirteen years of age.

Mr. Brooks developed in his young pupil a taste for reading. Some of the books that held Jawahar's interest were **Don Quixote, Prisoner of Zenda,** novels by Scott and Dickens, H. G. Well's romances, and Sherlock Holmes' stories. Mr. Brooks encouraged his pupil to read newspapers. At first Jawahar did not understand all that was written in the papers; and more frequently he had to dip into the dictionary to consult the meanings of difficult words. Soon he

found that he could not only read his newspaper with ease, but also could find some interest in doing so.

At this time the Russo-Japanese war was in progress and the incredible stories of Russian atrocities and the stories of misery suffered by Japanese victims were told in the Press. The war-news stirred up the enthusiasm of Jawahar and every morning found him deeply studying the newspapers. His sympathies were, of course, with Japanese. The tales of Japanese suffering created in him an interest to know more about the country, and so he invested a little money in purchasing some books on Japan and her people. Reading of Japanese history, which was impregnated with the brave exploits of Japanese patriots, infused in him nationalistic ideas. He more than once, dreamed about battles, in which he fought, sword in hand, for India to free her from foreign bondage.

Now a change occured in the studies of Jawaharlal. Many Indian students were proceeding to England for studies, and it was a time when many a rich father desired to send his son to foreign countries. Motilal was no exception, and besides had the means and position to give his son a foreign education. So it was decided in the Nehru family that young Jawahar should cross the seas shortly. Thus it came about that in May 1905, Jawaharlal, then only a boy of fifteen, set sail for England, accompained by his father and mother.

III

Jawahar was lucky enough to find a vacancy at Harrow, and, to begin with, he was put in a low form because he had very little knowledge of Latin. But Jawahar was pushed higher up soon, when he showed considerable advance in his studies. Since he stuck to his habit of reading the newspapers regularly, he was well posted on general knowledge and the events of the day, and when once his master asked the boys about the new Government of England, formed after the General Election of 1905, Jawahar was the only boy in the class, who could give complete information about the new Cabinet.

Two years spent at Harrow convinced Jawahar that he had learned everything there was to learn and so he left Harrow to join Cambridge. Jawahar liked the life at Harrow immensly and he grieved much at parting. When he joined Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1907, he was only seventeen.

After spending three years at Cambridge, Jawahar graduated in 1910. Then he went in for Law, spending another two years in England. During these years of life in Europe he was closely following the political movements in India. There were two Schools of thought in Indian politics to be reckoned with, one the Moderates and the other the Extremists. The former believed in constitutional methods while the latter advocated direct action in any form provided it could bring the desired effect. The Extremists were led by Lokamanya Tilak, and the Moderates by

G. K. Gokhale. Motilal Nehru also was drawn slowly into politics, and he showed an inclination to join the Moderates. His years of training as a lawyer made him think that the constitutional method of fighting would be more dignified and honourable than the much-talked off direct-action methods of the Extremists. Besides, a verbal warfare with the Government appealed to him and so he threw himself in with the Moderates. At the same time he admired the extremist leader, Lokamanya Tilak.

Jawahar was called to the Bar in 1912, and in the same year he returned to India after a stay of over seven years in England. He was glad to be home again, and for the first few months following his return from Europe he found life pleasant. To be with old friends and relatives after a long interval of seven years was exhilarating. As time passed away the novelty and new–found joy at home faded away and the monotany of the uneventful life stared him in the face. He took to law and joined the Allahabad High Court. In the High Court he found interest in his profession, but soon his enthusiasm was diverted in another direction. He was fond of politics, and he found much scope there to do national work. So he joined the Congress and took part in its occasional meetings.

At the same time Jawahar did not fail as a lawyer. During those few years when he pursued his profession as a lawyer, he carved a niche for himself in the Bar; he urgued successfully many cases, and

if he had continued as a lawyer he could have shone brilliantly at the Bar.

The years that followed were politically uneventful, and but for the friction and controversy within, the Congress had no definite programme before it. During these years Jawahar's political view was not definite and he had not decided as to what School of thought he should accept. Those were years of study and observation. He followed the controversy among the different factions in the Congress, and made a critical and analytical study of each party's conventions and methods. He heard the lectures of the leaders of the different groups, discussed with them their view point, scarcely expressing his opinion on it. Beyond this his political activities did not march.

Jawahar married in 1916 in the city of Delhi. The summer following his marriage, he spent in the valleys of Kashmir. If was an exhilarating experience to run away from the humdrum city life to the quietude of the mountain valley, where one could bathe in the invigorating cool-mountain breeze and inhale the healthy smell of the greenery. And to climb the slopes of the mountains, to feel the exertion of your labours and to see the snow-clad mountain tops in front of you, all these excite the adventurous spirit in one. Jawahar climbed the higher slopes more than once enjoying it immensely.

The years following the Great War were full of political excitement in India. Mahatma Gandhi had

returned from Africa and was trying to fight the Government by his Satyagraha method. Gandhiji had successfully conducted the agrarian struggle in Champaran and Kaira, and the nation looked towards him for a lead. In 1919, the Rowlatt Bills were passed in the Assembly. The Bills were mainly meant to suppress the nationalist movement by arresting and punishing the leaders of the country under one pretext or another. Gandhiji was seriously ill then, yet he organized an all-India protest against the Rawlatt Act. A day was fixed as 'Satyagraha Day', and the nation was called to observe **hartal** on that day.

Though the crowds were peaceful, the Government took the initiative to provoke and excite the people with the result that mob-violence broke out in big cities like Ahmedabad and Amritsar; police and military opened fire on the people in Delhi; martial law proclaimed in the Punjab; and the Jallianwalla Bagh tragedy was enacted by General Dyer. All these outbursts of violence grieved Gandhi, for it went against his grain. Thus the first act of Satyagraha ended as soon as it began. Also the outburst of mob-violence convinced Gandhi that the people were not thoroughly prepared to start any non-violent fight. Thereafter he resolved not to start the movement again, before the people were trained.

So he devoted the next year in training a selected band of men to fight the non-violent battle. When martial law was withdrawn from the Punjab an inquiry committee was formed to investigate into the cause

of mob-violence and the Punjab atrocities. Jawaharlal worked on the Committee, assisting Deshbandhu Das, who was in charge of the Amritsar area. This enabled Jawahar to understand the policy of the Government, which besides provocating and exciting the people, deliberately committed brutality under some false pretext.

Although Gandhi's Satyagraha movement was stopped for the time being it was not completely abandoned.

In the year 1920 Jawahar came in contact with the **Kisans** of Oudh. The **Kisans** were tenents under big Zamindars and they had been the victims of gross exploitation and embarrassing poverty. Jawahar, like many other political leaders who have come from the higher middle class society, was ignorant of the miserable condition of the peasants. His contact with the **kisans** brought about a change in his political outlook. When he heard the tales of woe and suffering from the peasants, all his sympathies went to them, and slowly he was becoming more and more attached to the cause of the labourers. Unconsciously, perhaps led by circumstances, he was becoming a socialist.

He wandered among the **kisans** from village to village, and addressed small meetings and got acquainted with their wants and grievances. The **kisans** movement was already started in Oudh, and Jawahar's participation in it gave it more strength and vigour, and also brought the movement to the notice of the prominent politicians of the country.

The growth of the agrarian movement frightened the Government and so they hurried on with tenancy legislation, which they proclaimed would greatly improve the lot of the peasants. In spite of the introduction of tenancy legislation the lot of the **kisans** remained the same, or perhaps, got worse.

In 1920 the Nagpur Congress adopted Gandhi's non-co-operation resolution. At that time Gandaiji had great influence with Khilafat leaders, and so, many of them were in the Congress. As the launching of non-co-operation aimed at setting at right the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs, the Khilafat leaders enthusiastically supported the movement. Leaders like Deshbandu Das opposed the non-co-operation resolution, but when the Congress adopted the resolution and launched the non-violent struggle they stood by the Congress and fought.

The year 1921 was full of political excitement. The movement was in progress and the Government adopted repressive measures to crush the movement. They were careful to deal with the big leaders of the country. They were puzzled and perplexed, for they were not certain whether the Indian police and military would carry out their orders to shoot and beat the non-violent mob. So they advanced cautiously picking out leaders one by one. Jawahar plunged headlong into the movement and conducted the movement in Allahabed. His father, Motilal, also was in the movement. He was the only Moderate leader who stood by Gandhi's non-co-operation resolution, when all other leaders of his party opposed it.

In 1921, the Prince of Wales visited India. The Congress decided to boycott all preparations for the reception of the Prince. The Prince, when he visited India, had a hard time, but he was not to be blamed for it. The people of India had no ill feeling against him, but they hated the Government which was trying to exploit the Prince's personality to prop up their decaying dignity at a time when the country was seething with discontent.

Jawahar and his father were arrested. At the time of his arrest Jawahar was the president of the Allahabad Provincial Congress' Committee. The committee, containing fifty-five members, was arrested **en bloc.** Both Jawahar and his father were sentenced to six months' imprisonment. This was Jawahar's first jail-going.

IV

Jawahar was released from jail after three months, before the termination of his term of imprisonment. This was because some one in authority suddenly discovered that Jawahar was wrongly sentenced and ordered his release. But Jawahar was not allowed to stay outside for long. Before a few months passed the authorities found out that Jawahar was intimidating the merchants to boycott foreign cloth. On this charge he was sentenced to nearly eighteen months' imprisonment.

Jawahar was kept in the Lucknow district goal with so many other political prisoners. There was no special accommodation for politicals. Some fifty or sixty of them were shepherded into one barrack and

were given no more freedom than that to wander in company inside the barrack. As the number of political prisoners increased the leaders were taken away and kept in separate cells, while the ordinary politicals were accorded the same treatment, or perhaps worse, as was accorded to ordinary convicts. They were forced to do even hard labour. Whenever the political prisoners protested against the ill-treatment meted out to them, they were flogged.

Jawahar spent his gaol life mostly in reading. It was a very good training and experience which stood him in good stead in later years when he was sentenced to very long terms of imprisonment.

In 1923 many of the political prisoners were released. Now Jawahar was once more free to carry on his national work. Soon after his release he was elected President of the Allahabad Municipality. Now Jawahar put his heart into the Municipal work, but he discovered very shortly that limitations of Municipal powers came in the way of improving the Municipalities in any direction. Before long he was disgusted with the work and did not give his heart to it. It was at that time a European Judge of the High Court suggested to Jawahar to try for the education ministership for U. P. which had fallen vacant. It was against his grain to accept any Government job. He believed that by serving a hostile Government he would be tightening India's bondage instead of freeing her from the foreign yoke. Any other person in his place would hardly have suffered such a rare

opportunity to hold power to slip through his fingers. Jawahar, being no opportunist, being a sincere and earnest servant of his Motherland, and having the welfare and liberation of his countrymen at heart, laughed down the judge's proposal of his becoming a minister. There cannot be a better illustration of Jawahar's sincerity of service to his country than the present one.

After the Congress of 1923, Jawahar was made the Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee. Now there was a split in the Congress Camp. A new party called the Swaraj Party was formed under the leadership of Motilal Nehru and Deshabandu Das With the coming into being of the Swaraj Party, Gandhi was pushed back a little, and for the seven to eight years that followed-till the year 1930, Gandhi remained behind the curtain and watched the developments. At the same time it should not be forgotten that Gandhi was the super-president of the Congress from the days of his joining it and remains as such even to-day.

In 1923 Jawahar had a queer experience in one of the Indian States in Northern India. Due to some personal quarrel between the Maharajas of Patiala State and Nabba State—two Sikh States in North India —the British Government deposed the Maharaja of Nabba. This action of the British Government was resented by the subjects of Nabba State and they protested in vain. It so happened that at this time, when the feelings of the people were excited over

the deposition of their king, the British Administrator who was appointed to rule Nabba State, stopped a religious ceremony which was performed at Jaito, a town in Nabba State. This act of the Administator, fanned into flame the smouldering embers of discontent in the heart of the people. They decided to conduct the religious ceremony at all costs and so sent groups of men to Jaito. The Administrator adopted repressive measures, brutally assaulting and shooting all Sikhs who tried to cross the Nabba bound and enter the State. The news of the brutal exploits of the British Administrator of Nabba reached far and wide, and the people anxiously awaited further developments.

The Congress sent Jawahar and two other Congress workers to Jaito to see and testify the truth of the news. The Administrator having got wind of Jawahar's proceeding to Jaito issued orders to arrest him as soon as he entered the boundary of the State. Jawahar had no inkling of the Administrator's intention and so he could not help expressing surprise when he was suddenly accosted by Nabba police, who put him under arrest.

Jawahar and his two companions, who had accompanied him to Nabba, were locked up in Nabba goal. A trial lasting for fourteen days was conducted and Jawahar was sentenced to two years imprisonment. During the period of the trial Jawahar and his friends were kept in a dingy cell which were much worse for human habitation. It was the hell of a place

to live in and so they looked forward to be removed to a better prison. But to their surprise they were not required to serve their sentence. The day after the sentence, they were shown an order from the British Administrator asking them to leave Nabba at once and not to return without special permission.

This small episode in Nabba State made Jawahar believe that many Indian States are under currupt administration like that of Nabba. The sad experience in the cell at Nabba, the mysterious and barbarous manner in which the trial was conducted, the ignorance of the presiding magistrate, who was commanded and ruled by the police officials in the court, all these convinced Jawahar of the rotten administration of Native States. So, if he has a prejudice against Indian States, it is not without foundation. At the same time no one should jump to the conclusion that the Administration in Indian States is invariably rotten to the core. There are a few examples of Indian States where the administration excels that of British India in being more democratic and modern. But it is to be admitted that the numerous little Native States, where the ruler as well as the ruled are bankrupt financially, intellectually and morally, are backward in every respect, and their existence, perhaps, will prove more a hindrance than a help to the establishment of a United India.

When he returned from Nabba Jawahar brought with him sickness. He did not suffer from severe attacks as his companions did, but he was confined to bed all the same.

For another two years Jawahar worked as the President of the Allahabad Municipality, and when he found that the limitations of the Municipality did not afford any scope for improvement he resigned his office in disgust. Also, the injurious element of communal differences was making its presence felt in the Congress circle; the leaders appeared to be more inclined to avoid the communal issue than to solve it. Many efforts were made to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity but in vain.

The Congress met year after year with apparently little progress. A dullness was slowly sweeping over the country, and after two years of excitement and struggle, which ended in bloodshed and tragedies, people seemed to long for a respite. And with the suspension of non-co-operation indefinitely by Gandhiji, the people seemed to sleep over the events of 1921 and 22.

In the year 1925, Jawahar's wife, Kamala Nehru, was seriously sick and was in a hospital in Lucknow. The doctors advised a foreign trip and further treatment in Switzerland. Jawahar welcomed the idea of a foreign travel. He was tired of inaction and wanted to be away from the communal atmosphere.

In March 1926, he, his wife, and his daughter, sailed from Bombay for Venice.

V

Jawahar's stay in Europe was mainly confined to Switzerland, Geneva, and a mountain sanatorium at Montana. The refreshing climate of the snowclad

mountains of Switzerland brought rest for body and mind. And a respite from the communal tangle at home gave Jawahar time and leisure to study more about international problems. At Geneva Jawahar's attention was drawn towards the activities of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office. There he met many Indians, who were mostly exiles staying in different countries of the continent. These Indian exiles mostly talked of socialism or nationalism, and were anti-British to the core. In Berlin there were a good many Indian exiles. These men were mostly students who had gone to Germany for technical education before War. The Great War marooned them in Germany. They formed themselves into the Indian Committee in Berlin. With the outbreak of War many Indian students living in Paris, Switzerland and other countries flocked to Germany and joined the Indian Committee. The German Government respected their anti-British feelings and gave the committee much importance. The end of the War brought harrowing economic conditions in Germany. The misery and acute suffering that enveloped the Germans on the eve of the War, made them forget the Indian exiles altogether. With the coming of the Nazi regime the Indians found it difficult to stay in Germany unless they fell in completely with the Nazi doctrine. This ended the Indian Committee in Berlin and increased the misfortunes of Indians in Germany.

In the year 1927 the Congress of the Oppressed

Nationalities was held at Brussels. Jawahar wrote home and suggested that the Indian National Congress should take part in the Brussels Congress. His suggestion was accepted at once and he was made the representative of the Indian National Congress at Brussels.

Many countries were represented at the Brussels Congress. There were representatives from Java, Indo-China, Palestine, Syria, Egypt and North and South Africa, This Congress helped Jawaharlal to study the problems of subject nations all over the world. At the Brussels Congress the "League Against Imperialism" was formed. This League had many distinguished personalties like Einstein, Madame Sun Yet Sen, and Romain Rolland, as its members. Jawaharlal also became a member of the League and remained as such till 1931. In 1931 his participation in Delhi-Truce between the Congress and the Government resulted in his expulsion from the League.

After the Brussels Congress Jawahar went to Moscow. In his trip to Moscow he had the company of his father, who had joined him in Europe in the summer of 1927. The visit to Moscow made him more and more of a socialist.

Jawahar's foreign travel had much to do with his socialist ideas. Talking and discussing with representatives of many oppressed nations convinced him that Imperialism was the main cause of oppression of the weaker people, and so long as Imperialism controls the reins of world-power the subject nations

could do nothing but crawl on their bellies. Again the triumph of Soviet Russia over the Imperialist Czar suggested openly that Socialism was the only substitute for Imperialism.

Thus on his return from Europe, the Indians found that Jawaharlal had drifted a little too much towards socialism, and for this reason the moderate school eyed him with concealed suspicion. At the same time the young men of the country, who had heard of Russia's victory and who were unconsciously sympathetic towards Soviet Russia, admired Jawaharlal's socialist tendencies and looked towards him for a lead.

The year 1928 was a year cf boycott. The Annual Session of the Indian National Congress met at Madras under the presidentship of Dr. M. A. Ansari. The Congress passed a resolution to boycott the Simon Commission which was visiting India. The main object of the Commission was to tour all over India and to report to his Majesty's Government about the fitness of Indians to rule their country. It is just like asking a police officer to establish the innocence of an accused whom he had charged with treason. The Indian people who had lost their faith in British justice found that no useful purpose could be served by co-operating with the Commission, and so they decided to boycott the Commission.

The boycott demonstrations in differeut provinces were headed by the provincial leaders. At Lahore Lala Lajpat Rai led the demonstrators. The British

Government in India wanted to show that India was ready to welcome the Commission with outstreched arms and in their enthusiasm to exhibit India's goodwill towards the Commission, they resorted to brutal suppression of the boycott demonstrations. They empowered the police and military with large powers to beat and assault, and if need be to shoot, the demonstrators. At Lahore the mounted police pounced upon the non-violent processionists like a pack of hounds pouncing upon its victims, and assaulted them. One English Police-officer beat severely on the chest of Lalaji with a baton. This physical injury was too great for his weak physique, and so the great leader of the Punjab died shortly after the assault. His death was associated with the brutal outrage on his person and people thought that the assault on Lalaji was a humiliation and an insult to the whole nation.

At Lucknow the boycott demonstration was headed by Jawaharlal and other Congress workers. There also the police hunted down the processionists and beat them. That was Jawahar's first experience of **Lathi** charge. The first two blows on his back stunned him, but he did not desert his friends. He stood his ground even when others had taken refuge on the side-walks and some shops. The tremendous hammering of the innocent people by the so-called guardians of law and order exposed the mockery of a Government which profess to exist for the good of the people. This incident changed Jawahar's opinion

of the existing Government. His discontent of the Government slowly changed into hatred. All the same, a strong determination was formed in his mind to root-out the hostile Government. Henceforward he devoted all his energy to educate and prepare the people to fight the hostile Government.

In the year 1928 many new associations were formed in India. Youth Leagues and Students' Associations sprang up throughout the country. Trade Unions were coming to prominence. Everywhere Jawaharlal was invited to preside. He had a very busy time presiding over the many associations and delivering speeches, spreading the ideas of Independence, to his youthful hearers. Besides, his hands were full with the Congress work, for he had again accepted the Congress Secretaryship.

In the year 1929 when the Congress met at Lahore Jawaharlal presided over it. This Congress stands out as a landmark in the history of the Indian National Congress since its start two scores years ago, for it was at the Lahore Congress, for the first time, the Independence resolution was adopted. This resolution sent the message to the people of the country calling them to come forth in readiness to fight the battle of Indepndence. In order to give a start to the struggle and to test how far the people were prepared for the ensuing war, January 26th, 1930 was fixed by the Congress as the Independence Day. The Congress called the people all over the country to take the pledge of Independence on that day.

VI

The year 1930 began with the starting of Civil Disobedience movement. The events of the years 1930 to 1933 must be fresh in the memory of many of my readers and yet a short review of them here will not be out of place. Volumes have been written about the events in papers and magazines and books, and many poems and songs have been composed and sung. Perhaps, with the passing of time the books might be forgotton and the songs might be neglected, but the impressions that were formed in the minds of thousands of men and women who participated in the movemoent could never be effaced.

The start was made with the celebration of the Independence Day. The British Government did not, and perhaps do not even to day, believe in Indian Independence, and so, they welcomed Indian's Independence Day rejoicing with a display of Imperialist brutality. As usual the police and the military were asked to stand by in readiness so that their services, to preserve law and order, might be requisitioned at a short notice.

The Independence Day was celebrated with spirited enthusiasm in all the important cities of the country in the teeth of police and military interference. The Congress leaders racked their brains to devise means and ways to contiune the Civil Disobedience movement. They looked towards Gandhiji to work some miracles and place before them his plan of the

fight. Gandhi did not fail the Congress leaders. With a magician's skill he discovered the inquitous salt-tax, which, he said, was an unbearble burden on Indian's mass population, and he told the people to disobey the law. He himself took the lead and started on his famous march to Dandi beach, with a selected band of non-violent fighters, to manufacture salt from sea-water.

Many of India's leaders, who had been trained to think constitutionally only, could not understand Gandhi's subtle move. They could not realise the tremendous possibility and ease with which the salt-law could be broken:by the millions of India at a short notice, and thus giving the movement an all-India character.

On 6th of April Gandhiji broke the salt—law on Dandi beach, and a couple of days later he gave permission to Congress, and through it to the people, to break the salt-law. The nation heaved with great enthusiasm and excitement, and the word 'salt' seemed to produce a magical echo in the hearts of the people. Crowds of men, women and children marched with defiant gait to the sea-shore and proudly bore home pitchers full of salt-water. The angry breakers of the ocean must have roaringly protosted against the outragious act of the people who stole the water of the sea. But how one could pay heed to either the angry protest of the mighty breakers,or to the inhuman brutality of the mighty British Empire, when one is caught in the whirlpool of maddening nationalism.

Jawaharlal was arrested on the 14th of April for breaking the Salt Act, and Gandhi was arrested on the 15th of May. The movement did not die down with the arrest of the leaders. The people organised many raids on Government salt pans and depots. There were many painful incidents of police brutality during these days. Broken heads and fractured bones littered many a street and for the time being human blood became cheap. People were no longer afraid of going to prison; on the other hand it was considered an honour to court arrest and imprisonment. Day after day thousands of persons were arrested and locked up in jails. It was a real job for the Government to find accommodation for the ever increasing number of political prisoners. The Government tried its best to check the influx of political prisoners by terrorising the people outside, and by barbarously treating the politicals inside the prisons. But they could not gain their object.

Now the wisdom of making peace with the Congress dawned upon the Viceroy. So negotiations were carried on between the Viceroy and Gandhiji, who was at Yervada Prison. The negotiations resulted in Gandhiji's agreeing to come to a settlement with the Viceroy, and in order to facilitate the meeting of prominent leaders, they were released from jail.

Now Motilal Nehru was not keeping good health He was very sick when he was in jail and even after his release he did not show any improvement. On the other hand his condition grew worse causing

great anxiety. Jawahar had already served nearly a year of his term of imprisonment. In the noon of January 26th 1931, when he was conversing with his companaions in the prison, news was brought to him about his father's serious illness. Also he was informed that he was released. Once out of the prison Jawahar straightway went to Allahabad to be near his father's sick-bed. The same day many leaders, including Gandhi and the members of the Congress Working Committee, were released. The leaders, who were anxious about Motilal Nehru's health, wanted to go to Allahabad. So Gandhiji summoned all of them to attend a meeting to be held at Allahabad in the house of Motilal Nehru. Thus around the sick bed of one of India's great leaders the Congressmen discussed the peace terms.

Meanwhile, when the Civil Disobedience was in progress in India, the First Round Table Conference met in London. Many Moderate leaders and title holders and communalists, who had the welfare of British Rule at their hearts, attended the Conference in London as India's representatives. How far these gentlemen represented the Indian people at the Conference, they themselves knew not, and yet they presented India's case before the British politicians. The First Round Table Conference established, among many other things, two facts. First, it made the British politicians realise that it was Congress and not any other organization that represented India, and that without the co-operation of the Congress

the deleberations at the Conference would carry little weight. Secondly, it convinced the Moderate leaders and other members of the Conference that they represented themselves and not India's millions at the Conference. This realisation resulted in convening the Second Round Table Conference.

Motilal Nehru's condition grew worse from day to day and on 6th February he died. Motilal's death was a great loss to his son and a greater loss to the country. The whole country mourned the loss of the great leader and avalanches of messages of sympathy poured in from all corners of the country and these messages comforted a little the aching hearts of the Nehru family.

Motilal Nehru's body was borne in a car to the banks of the Ganges in a procession and there the body was consigned to the flames. Huge crowds of people, among whom were Gandhiji and other prominent leaders, were present at the ceremony.

Gandhiji stayed at the Nehru home for a month so as to comfort the bereaved family. His presence brought peace and comfort to all. Perhaps it was during this period Jawaharlal become more attached to Gandhiji. And Mahatmaji must have drawn Jawaharlal in whom he had built high hopes, close to him just like a magnet attracts an iron rod. Even to-day, in spite of his differences with Gandhiji, Jawaharlal adores the Great Son of India.

Jawaharlal was not keeping good health and so the doctors advised him to have a short hoiday. He

also longed for a short respite after a year or more of anxious and exciting events. So he started on a tour to visit South India and Ceylon. Mean-while a truce was signed between the Congress and the Government and the Civil Disobedience was temperorily suspended.

VII

Jawaharlals trip lasted only for seven weeks. First he went to Ceylon where he visited many Buddhist monasteries and famous historical ruins. In that picturesque land of cocoanut trees the people were very hospitable, and they welcomed Jawaharlal warmly.

From Ceylon he went to South India, visiting many Native States. He found Travancore and Cochin educationally foremost in India; Mysore industrially far ahead of British India; Hydrabad, though the biggest Native States in India was backward. Everywhere hospitality surrounded Jawaharlal but he found the hospitality suffocating as the people who showed it did not enjoy civil liberties and the elementray rights of civilized folk.

Returning from his tour Jawahar plunged into the whirpool of Congress politics. With the signing of the Delhi-Truce the Civil Disobedience was withdrawn, but the Government showed no inclination to withdraw the special powers they had given to police. Cn the other hand rumours told the tale that the Government had taken advantage of the Truce period to make thorough preparations to crush the Congress movement completely.

leaders. Jawaharlal conferred with the U. P. Provincial Congress Committee, as well as the members of the Working Committee on the matter. The Working Committee decided to wait till Gandhiji's arrival from England. So Jawaharlal had to pacify the peasants and to advise them to wait.

The situation was getting worse day by day, and Jawaharlal's and other Congressmen's petition to the Governor of the U. P. Government could not bring out any change of attitude on the part of the Government. There were signs all around of the growing tension between Government and Congress and also signs of the Truce-link slowly breaking down. The additional delay of Gandhiji in London disturbed the Congressmen, for they were trying their level best to save a conflict, in spite of Government's provocations, before Gandhiji's return. But fate willed otherwise. The agrarian situation in U. P. assumed grave proportion demanding immediate handling. As if adding fuel to the fire of discontent spreading rapidly in the Congress circle, the Government promulgated ordinances to suspend the rent activities in rural areas of Allahabad. This unwelcomed move of the Government decided Jawaharlal to take to action. He wanted to advise the peasants to start a no-tax campaign; he wanted to confer with the Working Committee to decide the issue. So he started for Bombay with Sherwani, the President of the U. P. Congress Committee.

On the morning of 26th December 1931, Jawahar

and Sherwani got into the train for Bombay. The morning paper brought the news of the arrest of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Doctor Khan Sahib, in the Frontier Province. Jawahar expected that his journey would not be allowed to continue. His expectation came true before long. When the train stopped at a wayside station, a usual stopping place, the police officials approached Jawahar's compartment and arrested him as well as Sherwani.

When Gandhi landed in India he came to know about the arrest of prominent Congressmen and the promulgation of many Ordinances. These made it plain that the Government had begun its repressive policy to crush the national movement. It grieved him much to see the way in which Government disregarded the truce terms. He telegraphed to the Viceroy asking for an unconditional interview. In reply to his telegram Government ordered the arrest of Gandhi and the Congress President. Now fierce repression was let loose on India and all national associations, youth leagues, and the Indian National Congress were declared unlawful bodies. The Congress Working Committee had no alternative left except to resort to Civil Disobedience. Thus the second non-violent battle began.

On 4th of January Gandhi and Vallabhbhai Patel, the Congress President, were confined without trial as State prisoners, and Jawaharlal was tried and sentenced to two year's rigorous imprisonment. On

that fateful day, January 4th 1932, a lot of things happened all over the country. Many **lathi** charges involving deaths and casulities, many arrests, many imprisonments and many other exhibitions of brutality on the part of the Government took place.

In spite of the arrest of the leaders and ruthless repression, Civil Disobedience continued. The jails overflowed with political prisoners. Gandhiji was in Yarvda Prison and from there he conducted and directed the Harijan Movement which he had started. Jawaharlal did not much like Gandhiji's concentration on small issues, like the Harijan Movement. He believed that by attaching much importance to side issues the main struggle lost its vigor and its significance. But he could do nothing from inside the prison.

The struggle continued waxing and waning, and as months passed the people seemed to be tired of the struggle and seemed to long for some excuse to avoid arrests and prison-going. Many welcomed the Harijan Movement and worked for the Harijan cause. This movement was not unlawful and hence there was no risk of arrest.

Occasionally Gandhi threw a bomb-shell from his cell in the form of fasts. In the middle of September 1932, Gandhi decided to " fast unto death " in disapproval of the the separate electorates given to depressed classes. This news spread far and wide and the country heaved with anxiety. The British Government were at their wits' end and they made

an effort to arrive at a settlement. When the settlement was reached Gandhi gave up the fast. Again in May 1933, Gandhi began his twenty-one-days fast as a protest against the Government's refusal of certain facilities to him to direct the Harijan Movement. During these days Gandhi had been in and out of prison many times.

The Civil Disobedience was there in theory, but in practice it had died down. Days and months passed and the day of Jawaharlal's release was approaching. On the 30th of August, 1933, news of his mother's serious illness reached Jawahar, and the Provincial Government ordered his release at once though thirteen days yet remained to complete his term of imprisonment.

VIII

As soon as he was released from jail, Jawaharlal went to Lucknow, where his mother was lying in a hospital. He was greatly pleased to be at his mother's sick-bed, so he stayed in Lucknow for some days. During the last three years of intense national struggle he was so much engrossed in the fight that he could get no time to look to his domestic or personal affairs. Besides, the major part of his life, during the days of Civil Disobedience, was spent in prison cells, and thus he had no opportunity to enjoy domestic life. And again he was not certain when he would be rearrested. Jawahar did not, for the time being, indulge in any activity that would entail his freedom for he wanted to be by his mother's side at the time

of her sickness, and also wanted a little time and leisure to set things right at home before he would be called to the prison again.

Now Civil Disobedience had been suspended and the country was politically quiet except for occasional arrest and demonstrations here and there. Jawahar's mother improved and that brought comfort to his heart. At the same time his wife Kamala Nehru was not all well, and so he decided to go to Calcutta to consult doctors in connection with his wife's health. Also he wanted to advise the young men of Bengal to refrain from terrorist activities which did more harm than good to the counry's national advance.

His brief stay at Calcutta was pleasant. He addressed a few public meetings. It was already said before that Jawaharlal was attracted towards Socialism, and in spite of Russia's aggressive policy it held out some charm and fascination to him. And through his speeches he was slowly spreading Socialist ideas among the peasantry as well as the young men of the country.

On his return from Calcutta, Jawaharlal visited Behar to have a look into the ruins of the Behar Earthquake which had occurred just then. He was greatly moved at the sight of many poor and innocent people, who were made to sufier bitterly for no crimes of theirs. Nature seemed to join hands with the rich to trample upon the poor peasants of Behar, who were already crumbling down from the heavy burden of zamindari system.

He felt that it was really cruel on the part of Nature to punish these people who had taken a leading part in the freedom movement.

As soon as he returned home to Allahabad he organized Earthquake relief funds to help the victims who had been thrown homeless and helpless in the street. But the Government did not wish that Jawahar should do even a bit of humanitarian work. On February 14th, 1934, the day after his returning from the Calcutta tour, he was arrested for the so-called seditious speeches he had made at Calcutta. He was taken to Calcutta and after the trial, was sentenced to two years imprisonment, This time he was sent to Alipore Gaol.

This was the seventh time he was arrested and sent to jail. To know this fact mystifies an ordinary individual. It is terrifying to imagine your great man going to jail seven times and suffering imprisonment and hard labour for the only crime of his being the people's leader and the champion of their freedom and liberty. At the same time it opens your eyes to the tremendous sacrifice your leader is making for the country's cause, and it inspires you to nobler and braver deeds in the country's cause and prompts you to follow in the foot-steps of your leader. It also helps you to realise the humiliating position you enjoy in your motherland, the position of being a stranger and slave in your own house. This realisation rouses the dormant spirit of independence in you, and the desire to strive for the liberation of your body and

soul takes possession of you. It was some such feeling that throbbed in the hearts of millions of Indians, when they beheld their leaders being taken to prisons.

Six months after the arrest and imprisonment of Jawahar, he was suddenly released. When he reached Allahabad he was told by the Magistrate there that his release was temporory and that it was purposly meant to give him facilites to be by the side of his ailing wife. Kamala Nehru was seriously sick and the air at home was filled with anxiety for her recovery. Meeting of Jawahar brought about some improvement in her condition, but that very improvement served as sufficient excuse for the Government to take Jawahar back to his cell in the prison. Thus after eleven days of suspended freedom Jawahar went back to jail.

Next time when Jawahar was released from prison his wife was in Germany undergoing further treatment The news had come that Kamala Nehru's condition was critical, and at once Jawaharlal was released, nearly five and a half months earlier. It was on September 4th, 1935. He hurried to Europe by air. But unfortunately for him his dear one succumbed to her illness, and he returned home sad at heart, and perhaps feeling very lonely and desolate.

IX

By now the congress had drifted a little backward. The direct action issue was pushed aside and discussion about Council entry and elections was

pushed to the forefront. Jawaharlal was not completely against Council entry, for he knew that sooner or later Congressmen should occupy responsible office. Thus Congress entered the council and contested election with the result that to-day in eight Provinces Congress Ministry is administrating.

In 1936, at the April Session of the Congress, Jawaharlal was elected the President. At the Christmas Session in the same year, he was reelected. Thus to-day he is the President of the Indian National Congress.

Now the fight being over,the President embarked upon a touring programme. In May 1937 he started his tour to Burma, and then went to Malaya where he was accorded a warm reception. The management of 'The Indian,' the only English weekly of the Indians in Malaya, was chiefly responsible for Jawaharlal's visit to that country. During his one week's stay there he had a heavy programme, visiting Penang, Ipoh, Kaula Lumpur, Singapore and other important places. "The Indian," calls him the "uncrowned King of India"; this illustrates the respect and esteem in which Jawaharlal Nehru is held by Indians who are living outside India.

Now Jawaharlal is on a tour all over India. Only last month he visited the city of Baroda, where he was accorded a magnificient recepition. It is difficult to say what impression Jawaharlal carried about Baroda city and the citizens, but it is easy to say that the citizens of Baroda displayed great enthusiasm

in receiving and honouring India's Great Leader. Educational Institutions, and private and public bodies vied with one another in showing their admiration and respect for him and the Great National Institution of which he was the head.

Thus, we have now come to the end of this story, but before closing we shall just look at Jawaharlal more personally. Upto this time we have been studying his life, linking it always with the Great Institution of which he formed an important part. Now we shall turn to things more personal.

Jawaharlal leads a simple life and has taken to wearing Khadhar from the date of his joining the Congress. He has a pleasant smile to all, and has a fond affinity towards children. He would greatly enjoy his leisure hours playing with little folk.

Jawaharlal stands out as the most marked personality in India. In his popularity he is second to none among the Indian leaders, perhaps with the only exception of Mahatma Gandhi. No other Indian leader, possibly with the exception of Mahatma Gandhi, has influenced the political thought and action of the younger generations of Indians as much as Pandit Jawaharlal. He was mainly responsible for the Congress ideal of 'Independence,' and for the acceptance by the Congress as one of its creeds the famous "Fundamental Right's Resolution."

Jawaharlal is a remarkably cultured man, and he has a sound knowledge of the history of the different nations of the world. He being the embodiment of

eastern and western culture, attaches great importance to the cultural advancement of a nation. He is not an orator, but a forcible speaker. He has no love for sugarcoated phrases or expressions. He speaks directly and to the point, and his words echo with the ring of sincerity and earnestness. He is a man of vision, and has faith in his cause; and he is a lover of direct action. He is very generous in his sacrifice and is fearless in battle. He is referred to as the Idol of the youth but the truth is that he is the Idol of India's young and old alike. They all adore him. In Jawaharlal India finds a great leader, a gallant fighter, a master mind and great personality.

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